

Message Text

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17/51

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CU-02 OMB-01 NIC-01 SCCT-01 SY-04

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 SAB-01

SAM-01 IO-10 /088 W

----- 115379

R 091430Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1294

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 0259

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, EG

SUBJECT: STUDENT UNREST

SUMMARY. STUDENT UNREST ON CAIRO AND ALEXANDRIA COMPUSES IS ENDEMIC. THIS YEAR A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR HAS BEEN STRIFE BETWEEN MARXISTS, WHO ADVOCATE VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND RETURN OF POLITICAL PARTIES, AND NASSERISTS WHO URGE PEACEFUL CAMPUS DEMONSTRATIONS IN FAVOR OF ARAB SOCIALISM. LIBYANS MAY BE HELPING NASSERISTS, BUT MARXISTS ARE PROBABLY ACTING WITHOUT ANY OUTSIDE DIRECTION. SO FAR MOST STUDENTS ARE APATHETIC. END SUMMARY.

11. SINCE BEGINNING OF 1974-75 ACADEMIC YEAR, UNREST ON CAIRO CAMPUSES HAS BEEN IN LARGE PART A RESULT OF BASIC DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BETWEEN TWO GROUPS, ONE STYLING ITSELF "NASSERIST" AND A SECOND LOOSE COALITION OF MARXISTS. MARXIST STUDENT ORGANIZERS, WHOE NUMBER IS PROBABLY LESS THAN 50 AT CAIRO UNIVERSITY, CONFIDENTIAL

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WANT VIOLENCE. IDEALLY, THEY WOULD LIKE TO INCITE STREET

DEMONSTRATIONS IN WHICH RIOTERS ARE INJURED OR EVEN KILLED, IN ORDER TO FORCE MAJOR CRISIS ON "BOURGEOIS" GOE. NASSERISTS, WHO APPEAR MORE GENUINELY INTERESTED IN SOLVING DOMESTIC PROBLEMS, HAVE SPECIFIC REMEDY (ADMITTEDLY FUZZY) TO OFFER, VIZ. RETURN TO NASSER'S ARAB SOCIALISM. UNLIKE MARXISTS, NASSERISTS URGE PEACEFUL, NOT VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND ON CAMPUS, NOT IN STREET.

2. RESPONSIBLE CAIRO UNIVERSITY STUDENT NEWSPAPER SAWT AL-FAMI'A HAS PUBLISHED ACCOUNTS OF RECENT FIST FIGHTS AND VERBAL SLINGING MATCHES BETWEEN NASSERISTS AND MARXISTS, NOTABLY ON DECEMBER 31, BUT ALSO IN DAYS AFTER JAN 1 RIOTING. IN WAR OF WORDS, CAIRO UNIVERSITY "NASSER THOUGHT CLUB", REACTING TO NEW YEAR'S DAY RIOTING, ISSUED STATEMENT JAN 2 WHICH CALLS FOR ADHERENCE TO ALLIANCE OF THE POPULAR FORCES, MOBILIZATION OF ALL POPULAR AND MILITARY POTENTIAL FOR BATTLE, AND REJECTION OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL. IT ALSO DEMANDS EITHER RELEASE OF ARRESTED STUDENTS OR ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHARGES AGAINST THEM, AND URGES PRICE STABILIZATION AND LIMIT OF IMPORTS TO PUBLIC SECTOR. IN RETALIATION, MARXIST STUDENT CLUB ALSO ISSUED STATEMENT WHICH, TYPICALLY, WAS LESS DETAILED AND MORE RADICAL, I.E., A DEMAND FOR DISSOLUTION OF ASU AND FORMATION OF PARTIES.

3. AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA IS REPORTING SEPARATELY INCIDENT PROVIDED JAN 3 BY COMMUNIST GROUP AT ALEXANDRIA UNIVERSITY. WE UNDERSTAND LEFTIST STRIFE CONTINUES THERE, AS ALSO AT AIN SHAMS UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO. LARGE PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS ARE DAILY PHENOMENON AT AIN SHAMS WHERE, ACCORDING TO SAWT AL-GAMI'A, TWO "IDEOLOGICAL CURRENTS" EXIST: ONE CALLS FOR DIALOGUE (I.E., NASSERISTS) AND THE OTHER CALLS FOR STREET DEMONSTRATIONS BUT WITHOUT FULL DEFINITION OF DEMANDS (I.E., MARXISTS).

4. TRADITIONALLY, LIBYAN TROUBLEMAKING ON EGYPTIAN CAMPUS HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITIES OF ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALIST GROUPS. (THERE ARE, FOR EXAMPLE, WALL POSTERS AT CAIRO'S FACULTY OF LAW DENOUNCING EFFORTS TO "STAMP OUT ISLAM"), BUT WE SUSPECT SOME LIBYAN MONEY MAY ALSO BE FINDING ITS WAY TO NASSERIST STUDENT GROUPS. CAIRO 9987 REPORTED SENIOR UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATOR CONFIRMED LIBYAN PRODIGALITY ON CAIRO CAMPUS. SINCE STUDENT RELIGIOUS GROUPS ARE QUIESCENT NOW, WE WONDER WHERE LIBYAN MONEY IS GOING, IF NOT TO NASSERISTS.

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5. "COMMUNIST" AND "MARXIST" LABELS ARE USED LOOSELY BY EGYPTIAN COMMENTATORS AND OFTEN CAN BE TAKEN TO MEAN FAR LEFT NASSERISTS, NOT DYED-IN-THE-WOOL SOVIET DIRECTED OR MAOIST AGENTS. WE DOUBT THAT SOVIET EMBASSY OR TRADITIONALLY MIDDLE AND UPPER EGYPTIAN COMMUNIST ESTABLISHMENT IS BEHIND STUDENT MARXIST ACTIVITIES. LEADING EGYPTIAN CP MEMBER RECENTLY LAMENTED TO EMBOFF THAT EGYPTIAN STUDENTS ARE NOT AMENABLE TO IDEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINE OR CONTROL.

6. MOST IMPORTANT POINT TO MAKE NOW IS THAT MAJORITY OF STUDENTS OF POLITICAL CENTER AND RIGHT ARE PROVING RESISTANT TO LEFTIST CALLS TO ACTION. SO FAR NEITHER MARXISTS NOR NASSERISTS HAVE FOUND SPECIFIC ISSUE WITH SUFFICIENT DRAMATIC APPEAL FOR THEIR PURPOSES. IF RECENT LARGE SCALE ROUND-UP OF COMMUNISTS (CAIRO 129) TURNS OUT TO INCLUDE LARGE NUMBERS OF STUDENTS, THIS COULD CONCEIVABLY SERVE AS SPARK FOR WIDE-SCALE STUDENT ACTIVISM.
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